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ABSTRACT

The booklet summarizes recommendations of the New Jersey Education Study Commission regarding program options, the role and functions of the child study team in the local setting, teacher training, and special education funding. Recommendations for program options focus on a categorical system based on educational needs: (1) general education program with intervention, (2) general education program with related services, (3) part-time special education program, and (4) full-time special education program. Recommendations regarding the child study team fall into the areas of consultation, prevention, intervention, and assessment. Among recommendations for training and development are strengthened practicum components, enforcement of the requirements for a Comprehensive System of Personnel Development, and set-aside of P.L. 94-142 funds for inservice training. Among recommendations regarding funding are determination of costs on a program basis, emphasis on early prevention of handicapping conditions, and provision of state aid during the same year as that of service delivery. A discussion of recommendations follows each of the four topic areas. (CL)

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THE TURNING POINT: New Directions for Special Education

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Report of the New Jersey Special Education Study Commission

EC 182556

Introduction

Since the spring of 1981, a review of the existing system for delivering special education services and programs has been underway. The antecedents of that review date to 1979, when Thomas J. Deverin introduced Assembly Bill 351 into the State Legislature. It proposed legislation to provide services based on programmatic need rather than on general categorical need. This legislative effort failed, however, because of the concerns raised regarding the possible loss in funding such a system would create and because many feared that the integrity and quality of special education that has been achieved so far would be jeopardized. At that time I was chairman of the Assembly Education Committee and so requested that the Department of Education undertake a comprehensive study of the issues.

Following my retirement from the legislature, the then-Commissioner of Education, Fred G. Burke, wrote me on December 9, 1981, asking if I would chair this Study Commission. The Commission members were mutually appointed by the Department and me.

In early April of 1982, the New Jersey Special Education Study Commission was created to examine more closely how well services were being delivered to New Jersey's handicapped children. The basic charge to the Commission was to undertake a comprehensive review of the current special education delivery system. Of major concern has been the practice of labeling children according to their handicapping conditions, e.g., "mentally retarded," "learning disabled," etc. There was also concern about the efficacy of programs, how personnel are being trained and used throughout the state, and the system for funding special education services. In particular, the Commission was asked to look at alternative methods for improving service delivery that could be used in New Jersey.

The Commission set immediately to work by organizing its efforts into four main areas: program options, i.e., the ways service delivery could be organized; the role and functions of the child study team in the local setting; teacher training; and special education funding. Four subcommittees were established to carry on this work; the subcommittees each reported periodically to their colleagues on the full Commission, which also developed its own agenda of studies and activities.

The full Commission has met thirteen times since April of 1982. On several occasions, outside experts were invited to meet with us to discuss the current research being done on service delivery, as well as innovative approaches in the field. In particular, the Commission was pleased to hear from Dr. James Ysseldyke of the University of Minnesota, Dr. Jay Gottlieb of New York University, and Dr. Rudolph Marshall, then of Rutgers University.

By January of 1983, a report of the Commission's progress was disseminated. At that time, we presented information on several experimental and innovative programs of the State Department of Education that were being conducted in Bergenfield, Cape May County, Glassboro, Hampton Borough, Montgomery Township, and Paterson. In addition, we reported on programs in Bergen County, Salem County, and South Brunswick Township.

In its deliberations, the Commission also reviewed information obtained from site visits to both Massachusetts and Maryland, where "non-categorical" programs had been instituted. We also shared our progress in defining a new model for special education service delivery, training, funding, and the role of the child study team. The Commission was impressed with what we learned about non-categorical service delivery programs and began considering seriously the potential of such an approach for New Jersey. Our finding at that time was that the labeling practice was unnecessary and probably detrimental to sound programming.

Following our interim report of January 1983, the Commission conducted three public hearings: at the New Jersey Regional Day School at Morris (Morristown) on November 28, 1983; at the New Jersey Regional Day School at Hamilton (Trenton) on November 29; and at the Atlantic County Vocational Technical School (Mays Landing) on November 30. Representatives from local education agencies, teachers, and parents were invited to appear before the Commission with their views.

We were particularly interested to learn the reactions of parents to establishing a non-categorical system of programming. Many expressed concern, even fear, that the disappearance of labels would carry with it a diminution of services, particularly since federal funding is tied to specific handicapping categories. We have therefore been most careful in our recommendations in all four areas to safeguard the current level of service delivery while seeking to expand and improve it. We have also taken great care to assure that the system we are recommending will in no way imperil New Jersey's share of federal special education funds.

Our recommendations in the four main areas are based on a significant amount of work, study, and reflection. They were approved by the full Commission at its meeting of August 30, 1984. The core of the system we are recommending is program-based. Every other recommendation in the report assumes a system organized in this way. We believe that such a system represents the best educational option for our state's handicapped children.

Finally, may I express my personal appreciation to the members of the Commission for the very gratifying work they have done. Their task has not been easy; indeed, it has often been tiring, difficult, and time-consuming. Yet each member gave unselfishly of time and energy. Thus, this report is truly a group effort. They have done well, and each Commission member deserves a vote of thanks from every parent, teacher, and handicapped student in our state.

Particular thanks are due to the subcommittee chairpersons: Ethan Ellis (Program Options), Michael DiBella (Child Study Team), Fred Abbate (Teacher Training), Richard Harclerode (Funding). Special thanks are also due to the staff of the State Department of Education, without whose assistance the work of the Commission would have been far more difficult and far less fruitful.

Finally, the Commission tested and integrated ideas from many sources into this report, not only those from our consultants and from the subcommittees, but ideas from educators, parents, and interested citizens as well. We believe that the system we have put forward in this report represents the best possible educational future for New Jersey's handicapped children.

Albert Burstein, Chairman

New Jersey Special Education Study Commission Recommendations on the Program Options for Special Education

The New Jersey Special Education Study Commission has examined several alternative ways to group children who need special education services, including the system now being used in New Jersey, as well as those used in other states. Based on our investigations, the Commission has adopted the following recommendations.

Program Recommendations

1. WE RECOMMEND that New Jersey adopt a categorical special education system whose categories are based on the educational needs of each student, instead of on the disability of each student. Individual student disabilities should be taken into account in implementing the new system, not in its design.

2. WE RECOMMEND four general formats for educational programs that will accommodate the full range of special education needs. These are:

General Education Program With Intervention

This program format provides preventative and intervention services for children who show evidence of school difficulties. The goal of intervention services to the pupil should be to keep the pupil in the regular class program. The interventions should include consultation with school staff and supportive services to the family of the child.

General Education Program With Related Services

This program format provides the related services necessary for a pupil to benefit from general education. Pupils requiring such services should be classified "Eligible for Related Services," according to criteria to be specified in regulation.

Part-Time Special Education Program

This program format provides part-time special education in the form of instructional periods that replace the regular class in specified areas of the curriculum. These pupils should be classified as "Eligible for Special Education," according to criteria to be specified in regulation. They should also be eligible for related services as required by their Individualized Education Programs (IEPs).

Full-Time Special Education Program

This program format provides full-time, self-contained instructional programs and related services for pupils who are classified as "Eligible for Special Education," according to criteria to be specified in regulation. These programs should be organized according to pupils' learning and behavioral characteristics.

3. WE RECOMMEND that the full-time special education format be organized into Basic Instructional Orientations (BIOs). The BIOs recommended are:

— behavioral,
— cognitive,
— sensory,
— physical/health, and
— communication.

These orientations, singly or in combination, should also be used to develop programs for preschool children with disabilities and for those with multiple disabilities.

4. WE RECOMMEND that the Department of Education develop and disseminate descriptions of the BIOs. These instructional orientations should be reviewed by experts in the field of special education, by local district personnel knowledgeable in special education, and by parents. They should then be refined further by field testing in urban, suburban, and rural districts.

5. WE RECOMMEND that the curriculum for pupils eligible for special education include all areas of the district's regular curriculum, modified to accommodate the unique learning characteristics of individual pupils.

6. WE RECOMMEND that the Department of Education collect, organize, and disseminate available special education curricula statewide and that the Department guide local school districts in identifying, organizing, and adapting these curricula to the goals and objectives of individual districts.

7. WE RECOMMEND that the Individualized Education Program (IEP) remain the basic planning device for each pupil requiring special education services. All areas of the district's curriculum should serve as a basis for developing the IEP.

Discussion of the Recommendations on Program Options

New Jersey's present special education system requires that pupils who are eligible for special education or related services be classified, i.e., labeled, with one or more of a dozen handicapping categories.* Once classified, a pupil can have access to a continuum of programming formats defined in the Code. This system of labeling causes two basic problems: (1) it directs needless public attention to the pupil's handicapping label, and (2) it gives credence to the erroneous idea that a label denotes a specific educational approach — a "medicine" for a "condition." The need to assign a label to a child before providing special education services has been widely debated. Requests for due process and case histories show that parents and pupils frequently resist special education assistance out of disdain or because they fear stigmatizing labels.

The Commission has reviewed the existing system for delivering special education programs and services with certain issues and findings in mind, chiefly:

- the use of disability labels,
- the concern with the growing number of children requiring special education services who are labeled as "handicapped,"
- the quality of special education instruction, and
- the lack of comprehensive curricula in many special education programs.

The Commission was also greatly concerned that so few children exit special education. Once into the present system, students tend to remain there, even though their handicapping condition may only be a mild one. When New Jersey implements a new system based on students' educational needs, instead of one based on their handicapping conditions, we expect that many more students will be able to return to general education.

The Program Options

The Commission considered the positive and negative effects of disability labels. Arguments supporting labels frequently center on the fact that labels convey some immediate information about the underlying causes of school failure. Opposing arguments focus on the fact that the labels do not address the educational needs of the students. Within a given category, students can vary greatly in the extent of their handicap (label) and in the range of their educational needs. We have found these opposing arguments to be far more persuasive in formulating our recommendations.

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* These categories are described in *New Jersey Statutes Annotated*, 18A:46-1.1 *et seq.*) and *New Jersey Administrative Code* (6:28-1.1 *et seq.*) and include the following handicapping conditions: auditorily handicapped, chronically ill, communication handicapped, emotionally disturbed, mentally retarded, multiply handicapped, neurologically impaired, perceptually impaired, preschool handicapped, orthopedically handicapped, socially maladjusted, and visually impaired.

The Commission's recommendation for four program formats will provide a continuum of services and programs. These will range from services designed to prevent the need for special education to intensive and concentrated programs of instruction for handicapped students. Whenever necessary, related services will be available to students who do not otherwise need special education.

The Commission believes strongly that the present categorical system, which emphasizes a student's disability, should be replaced by a categorical system that emphasizes the student's educational needs. The new approach will have many advantages:

(1) Classes will be organized in terms of the educational factors relevant and essential for student learning, including
   — levels of achievement,
   — rates of learning,
   — learning characteristics, and
   — behavioral characteristics;

(2) Teaching decisions about curriculum, strategies and techniques, and activities will be easier to make when program-based categories are used;

(3) A program-based system will include special education approaches to the disability; and

(4) Funding formulas to support categorical programs can be determined more readily and more accurately because the students' educational needs will be identified in the program description.

The Commission is fully aware that states must report annually to the U.S. Department of Education the number of children — by age — who exhibit the handicapping conditions described in law. Parents and students are also entitled to know the student's handicapping condition. But the law does not require that students be instructed in a class that bears the label of their handicapping condition. What it does require is that each student receive a free, appropriate, public education that is in accordance with the IEP. The program-based system the Commission proposes will fulfill both federal and state reporting requirements. Parents and students will continue to be informed of diagnostic results, and each student will continue to receive a free, appropriate, public education based on his or her educational need.

The Continuum of Services. At present, there are three program formats available for handicapped students in New Jersey: supplementary instruction, resource room, and instruction in a self-contained classroom. Related services are available in all three. To gain access to any of the three, students must be

classified according to one of the twelve officially recognized disability labels in the New Jersey code. We note that instructional groupings for both supplementary instruction and resource room programming are already non-categorical in New Jersey, in that pupils with different handicapping labels are grouped together for instructional purposes.

A brief explanation of the four instructional formats follows.

General Education With Intervention

This new program format will ensure that services will continue to be provided within general education because the format is designed to prevent a disability from developing into a handicap that needs special education. Consultation services, planning, intervention, and follow-up through the educational support team will be available for students and their families, as well as for teachers and administrators. Through these activities many student problems can be resolved in the early stages.

The Commission recognizes that a funding mechanism is needed to implement this early prevention approach. In the long run, however, we believe an educational approach that provides early recognition and intervention will prove more cost-effective in solving problems, before more extensive -- and more costly — special education becomes necessary.

General Education Program With Related Services

This program format will provide services such as transportation, physical therapy, counseling, and remediation for communication disorders for students who, with the additional service, can continue to function well in the regular class setting and benefit from it.

A student in this program format who meets the specified criteria will be determined "Eligible for Related Services" by the appropriate Educational Support Team member(s), parents, specialists, staff, and administrators. A related services plan will provide details on specifics and their implementation. Because the tutorial small group service supports regular education programs and does not replace them, supplemental instruction will become a related service instead of continuing as a program format.

Funding for the approved excess costs for related services should be provided through an appropriate funding mechanism developed by the Department of Education.

Part-Time Special Education Program

This program format will be provided as a replacement for regular class instruction, in given subject areas, to students who are designated "Eligible for Special Education." Eligibility will be determined by the full Educational Support Team, parents, specialists, staff, and administrators. The assessment should be focused on the student's unique educational needs. The nature and extent of part-time programming and the necessary related services will be specified in the IEP.

Full-Time Special Education Program

This program format will meet the student's educational needs in self-contained classes in public or private schools for the handicapped, or in a program run by other agencies of government. All students in this format will be designated as "Eligible for Special Education" only as the result of a comprehensive evaluation prior to placement. Each student's parents and teachers, specialists (as needed), involved administrators, the educational support team, and (where appropriate) the student, will have agreed that the self-contained setting best meets the student's unique educational needs. The details and characteristics of the program and the necessary related services will be spelled out in the student's IEP.

The Basic Instructional Orientation (BIO). When students are grouped according to their instructional needs, it is important to organize the instructional program around characteristics that are relevant to teaching and learning. These characteristics constitute Basic Instructional Orientations (BIOs); they are envisioned as the guiding element for each instructional program. The Commission anticipates that there will be five instructional programs: behavioral, cognitive, sensory, physical/health, and communication.

Each BIO should reflect the following information:

1. Program Characteristics
   a. Population
      The nature of the learning/behavioral needs of the students who are to be served in the BIO;
   b. Program
      The elements that distinguish one BIO from another and that describe the major emphasis of instruction and services;
2. Instructional Characteristics
   A description of the unique or major methods and techniques of the BIO;

3. Curriculum Considerations
   A comprehensive description of the adaptations, modifications, and substitutions the BIO is making in the curriculum, specifying the complete range of content and subject areas offered in the BIO;

4. Professional Services
   A description of all the services the special education program will provide as a part of the BIO, as well as additional related services that may be provided to a given student, based on the IEP;

5. Class Size
   A statement of the recommended range of student/teacher ratios;

6. Staff Qualifications
   Those teacher competencies necessary to deliver a given BIO;

7. Environmental Adaptations
   A description of the adaptations that need to be made to the building and the classroom, as well as an identification of the special equipment to be provided;

8. Instructional Materials
   A description of the instructional materials to be provided in the BIO; and

9. Groupings
   The groups to be served within the BIO.

Profiting from the Experience of Other States. The Commission has learned from reviewing the experience of other states that special education reform, without prior preparation of both parents and school districts, does not work well, despite changes made in laws and regulations. We suggest that New Jersey profit from the mistakes of other states by planning its approach to education reform. Accordingly, we recommend that the BIOs be reviewed by special education experts and field tested in local school districts before they are implemented statewide. The Department of Education should also identify and disseminate alternatives in curriculum, instructional aids, and appropriate educational technologies.

Curricula. It is often taken for granted that an appropriate curriculum exists for special education programs in each school district. In reality, many teachers decide what is taught in their classrooms, depending on their own skills, interests, and the needs of their students.

Giving more attention to organizing and implementing comprehensive curricula, consistent with the goals of education, is critical. Curricula should be

organized developmentally, according to the growth patterns of children. Curricula should also provide guidance to teachers on delivering instruction and on evaluation, to assure that curricular objectives are attained. The Commission also recommends that the curricula used with handicapped students have the same qualities as those in use among non-handicapped students in the local school district, particularly the consistency and continuity that allow comparative evaluation.

Because it is in a better position to keep abreast of developments and innovations in special education curriculum, and because it is in the best position to assure statewide dissemination, the Department of Education is the appropriate agency to accomplish these tasks. To assist school districts in capitalizing on both the old and the new, the Department should formalize its means of locating, storing, updating, and disseminating curriculum materials.

The IEP. The Commission believes that the IEP remains the best mechanism for planning special education instruction. In a program-based system, an educational profile should be constructed that:

(1) addresses the student's level of achievement in each curriculum area;

(2) specifies the modifications needed to accommodate each student's learning characteristics; and

(3) designates the specific skill areas needed in the instructional program (e.g., mobility skills for blind students).

The IEP should stipulate the student's learning characteristics, rate of learning, and behavioral characteristics. It should also recommend the educational strategies, materials, and equipment needed to achieve the learning goals of the students, as well as the systematic procedures to be used in monitoring the pupil's progress and thus the IEP's effectiveness.

General Recommendations

The Commission urges the adoption of the following general recommendations:

1. WE RECOMMEND that a task force be established and charged with making recommendations for legislation to improve the educational and other services needed by persons with disabilities who are older than twenty-one.

2. WE RECOMMEND further study to assure appropriate early intervention programs for children with disabilities, from birth through three years of age.

3. WE RECOMMEND expansion of the current program options for pupils now classified as eligible for day training.

New Jersey Special Education Study Commission Recommendations on the Role and Functions of the Child Study Team

New Jersey has long been a leader in taking a multi-disciplinary approach to providing special education services. As early as 1959, the Beadleston Act formally introduced the "child study team" concept and provided financial reimbursement for team services. In 1966, the Beadleston Law further clarified the role and responsibilities of individual team members. For a quarter of a century, child study teams have been part of the fabric of special education throughout New Jersey. With the passage of the federal Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975 (Public Law 94-142), multi-disciplinary decision making was mandated nationwide.

The Commission recognizes New Jersey's foresight in legislating a comprehensive, multi-disciplinary approach to assessing and educating exceptional pupils; we support this approach to solving school problems. Consequently, the Commission's recommendations are intended not just to reinforce the child study team concept but to enhance the delivery of services to general and special education students as well.

The Commission has reviewed the current responsibilities and practices of child study teams throughout the state. We have analyzed their impact on the system that delivers special education services. We have identified the issues we believe are critical to child study team services. As a result of our study, the Commission recommends that the child study team model be revised to overcome five basic limitations in the current system.

(1) There is insufficient opportunity for team members to participate in the timely identification and prevention of school difficulties.

(2) There is insufficient opportunity for team members to provide direct services to students, parents, and teachers.

(3) Inadequate information is being used to generate referrals and to determine which students are eligible for special education and related services.

(4) Inadequate information is being used to formulate and revise IEPs.

(5) Students are being unnecessarily "labeled" as a condition of receiving special education services.

In the light of these limitations, our recommendations fall into four broad areas: consultation, prevention, intervention, and assessment.

Recommendations on Consultation

1. WE RECOMMEND that the current "evaluation and classification" role of child study team members be redefined to emphasize the following services:

(1) consulting with general and special education staff and parents;

(2) giving direct support to general and special education pupils;

(3) participating in the identification and development of effective programs and practices at the classroom, building, and district levels;

(4) assessing individual pupils, using a variety of techniques; and

(5) coordinating, developing, reviewing, and revising IEPs.

2. WE RECOMMEND that the basic child study team (CST), comprising a school psychologist, school social worker, and learning disabilities teacher-consultant, be identified as the "Educational Support Team" (EST). This title accurately reflects the services the team provides and the broader population it actually serves.

Recommendations on Prevention

3. WE RECOMMEND that any funding system for special education provide for all EST services, including direct and indirect efforts to prevent the development of handicapping conditions.

4. WE RECOMMEND that a major role of EST members be participation in the development, implementation, and evaluation of prevention programs for students "at risk" of developing school difficulties.

Recommendation on Intervention

5. WE RECOMMEND that building level intervention committees be established to deal with concerns about general education students. These committees should be composed of members of the administrative, teaching, and pupil personnel staff, the student's parents, and one or more EST representatives. They should be responsible for defining and analyzing concerns about specific students, and should develop, put into practice, and monitor systematic intervention plans at the building level.

Recommendations on Assessment for Eligibility and Programming

6. WE RECOMMEND that the classification "Eligible for Related Services" be determined by the following persons: one or more EST representatives, members of the administrative and teaching staff, the parents of the individual student, and appropriate specialists. (Exception: Determining eligibility for speech

correction should continue as a shared decision between the speech correctionist and the student's parents.)

7. WE RECOMMEND that the classification "Eligible for Special Education" (whether full-time or part-time) be determined by the following persons: the full EST, members of the administrative and teaching staff, the parents of the student, and appropriate specialists.

8. WE RECOMMEND that new statements of the eligibility criteria for each special education program option and related service be developed and field tested under the auspices of the Department of Education. Eligibility criteria should include:

(1) the nature of the handicapping condition(s) (i.e., behavioral, cognitive, sensory, physical/health, or communication), and

(2) a statement of how the handicapping conditions affect school performance in academic and non-academic areas.

9. WE RECOMMEND a Comprehensive Student Evaluation System that provides for:

(1) collecting information from numerous sources that will help determine each of the following:
   a. a diagnosis of the handicapping condition(s),
   b. eligibility for special education,
   c. eligibility for related services, and
   d. the factors relevant to instructional planning and programming;

(2) planning and carrying out assessments based on relevant factors, including the nature of the referral; any previously identified handicapping condition; and the student's age, cultural and linguistic background, and mode of communication;

(3) creating a collaborative decision-making process among all those involved in the assessment, eligibility decision, and planning of the program;

(4) continually measuring student progress as the IEP is being carried out to determine the appropriateness of instructional procedures; and

(5) evaluating student progress at specified intervals to see if special education or related services should be continued, modified, or discontinued.

10. WE RECOMMEND that students with suspected handicaps of low incidence, including suspected or known hearing loss and multiple developmental disabilities, be referred to multi-disciplinary evaluation teams with special training and professional involvement with these populations.

Discussion of the Recommendations on the Role and Functions of the Educational Support Team

The Consultation Role of the Educational Support Team

Until now, the major responsibilities and time commitments of child study teams in New Jersey have had three foci: (a) processing the referrals of students suspected of having handicaps; (b) determining student eligibility for special education and related services, and assigning an eligibility label to the student; and (c) developing and reviewing IEPs. This model of service delivery is prompted by federal and state mandates, and has become the standard local practice.

Viewed in the broader context of general and special education, however, the present understanding of child study team members places them in a narrow decision-making role. The team's services are predominantly reactive and child-specific, allowing team members to be involved with only a limited number of students who are "at risk" or experiencing educational difficulties.

This traditional CST model has supported the goals of special education. However, the expansion and development of the field since the passage of P.L. 94-142 have implications that necessitate revising CST practices. In particular, the increasing number of special education students, their growing presence in general education programs, new knowledge about prevention, advances in instruction, and the increased emphasis on non-biased assessment all point in the direction of more supportive roles for child study teams. In short, they point toward reorienting the child study team to create an Educational Support Team (EST).

Thus, the Commission's goal transcends mere procedural compliance. We are committed to providing both equity and quality in special education. For these reasons we are recommending a consultation model that will enable EST members to serve more students. EST involvement in such efforts as primary prevention programs, intervention efforts in general education, and special education program development should foster collaborative problem solving in every district. The accessibility of EST members to school personnel, parents, and students should increase. EST members should have more opportunities to analyze the influence of classroom, home, and community on student performance. The designation "Educational Support Team" more accurately reflects these roles.

The current special education funding system provides reimbursement for students eligible for special education, but there is no funding for child study

team services. Therefore, to assure that New Jersey puts an EST consultation model into practice, we believe it is essential that the funding system provide for each EST function.

The Prevention Role of the Educational Support Team

New Jersey's special education laws and regulations specify that special consideration be given to discovering learning handicaps early and preventing them. But requirements and financial incentives for doing so have been lacking. Prevention programs for "at risk" students have been minimal. The growing number of students classified as educationally handicapped in our state suggests that, among other things, more preventive programs are needed.

Although there are several definitions of prevention, all of them focus on the need to reduce the incidence of handicapping conditions by enhancing cognitive, social, affective, and physical development. EST involvement in prevention means new professional roles and new alliances with community organizations and social service agencies. Therefore, EST members should have an appropriate professional background in child development, personality and learning theory, group dynamics, mental health consultation, and interagency collaboration. Given such a background, the EST should be able to play an important role in identifying, implementing, and evaluating various primary prevention strategies.

The Intervention Role of the Educational Support Team

Within the framework of the present identification-to-placement process, the primary response of the CST to school problems of individual pupils has usually been to conduct a comprehensive evaluation. Typically, after a formal referral for special education eligibility, the learning environment is analyzed, the student's educational history is reviewed, and teachers and parents are interviewed. A major limitation of this approach has been the limited availability of CST members to provide help to students, parents, and teachers prior to a comprehensive evaluation of the student.

Given this basic shortcoming, building-level intervention committees should be established. These committees would be responsible for developing systematic intervention strategies for individual students within regular education. The intervention committees should comprise regular education administrators and support staff, the student's parents, and one or more EST members. Building-level intervention committees can generate the information needed to determine which instructional strategies will be effective for a given pupil and

whether to refer for special education and related services. (NOTE: Building-level intervention committees are not intended to preclude direct referrals to the EST.)

This intervention model is consistent with the "protection in evaluation" and "least restrictive environment" provisions of P.L. 94-142. The approach provides for:

(1) a systematic analysis of the educational concern,

(2) an analysis of the factors in the educational environment that contribute to the problem,

(3) an identification of the factors in regular education that can be changed to meet the problem, and

(4) the effect of regular education modifications.

The literature favoring this practice reveals a reduction in the number of referrals to special education, increased assistance to teachers and parents in dealing with behavior and learning problems, and increased satisfaction of teachers with child study team (i.e., EST) members.

The Assessment Role of the Educational Support Team

At present, a comprehensive evaluation is mandatory to determine a student's eligibility for special education or related services. Information is collected in the form of social, psychological, educational, and medical evaluations. These data are used to select a disability label for the student and to develop the student's IEP.

Although these assessments can lead to an understanding of some school difficulties, the Commission is concerned about the appropriateness of evaluating all students in this way. An inflexible approach to assessment can result in redundant, insufficient, and educationally irrelevant information.

Instead, assessment should be planned and implemented based on relevant factors such as the nature of the referral and the student's age, cultural and linguistic background, and mode of communication. A broader approach to assessment — a Comprehensive Student Evaluation System — should be implemented. This system should comprise the following elements:

(1) eligibility criteria against which those responsible for the eligibility decision can make clear judgments. These criteria should include information on the nature of the handicapping condition and functional statements on how the condition affects the student's performance in academic and non-academic areas;

(2) appropriate data collection activities for determining:
   — student eligibility for related services,
   — student eligibility for special education, and
   — factors relevant to the instructional program.

   A major criticism of the current assessment system is its over-reliance on standardized test scores. These kinds of data rarely match the actual academic, social, and behavioral demands of the school setting. Therefore, assessment activities that complement standardized procedures should be used to discover information relevant to instructional decisions. A detailed analysis of the student's performance in specific curricular areas is basic to this assessment approach.

(3) shared decision-making among all those responsible for the eligibility decision and the student's subsequent instructional program;

(4) continual monitoring of the effectiveness of specific instructional techniques and materials; and periodic monitoring of student progress and the overall effectiveness of the program.

   Assessment within the Comprehensive Student Evaluation System is considered a process that is used to identify effective interventions. The IEP is viewed as a set of working hypotheses that must be verified through a formal system of monitoring.

(5) specialized ESTs prepared in the assessment and programming of students with low incidence handicapping conditions.

New Jersey Special Education Study Commission Recommendations on Training and Development

General Considerations

The Importance of Schooling. A society can provide nothing for its children that is more important than their education. The teaching profession is therefore to be valued and regarded with respect. We endorse without qualification the idea that teaching and the professions allied with it must be presented as attractive and worthy callings to intelligent young people making career choices. To the ends that teaching achieve the respect that is its due, and that it attract our best young people, all professional, certified staff in our schools should be evaluated frequently, according to a strict but fair system of accountability.

Standards. New Jersey is the only state in the nation that grants permanent certification to teachers graduating from approved undergraduate programs. This practice confuses meeting degree requirements with on-the-job effectiveness, it should be seriously examined.

Democracy of Cultures. Our nation's public schools educate children of all racial and ethnic backgrounds. Because this democracy of cultures is one of the richest and most valuable features of our society, New Jersey's public schools should implement their affirmative action policies with more vigor. In so doing, the state's educational system would demonstrate its respect for the integrity and skills of all its people.

Recommendations on Training and Development

The Commission has carefully analyzed the training and professional development of those charged with educating handicapped children in New Jersey. The recommendations on training and development that follow are made with the single objective of improving the effectiveness of education for our state's handicapped students.

Recommendations on Training

1. WE RECOMMEND that requirements for teachers of the handicapped be written to reflect the attainment of specific, essential competencies.

2. WE RECOMMEND that all certified staff employed by a local education agency attain some competency in and a working knowledge of the psychology and educational needs of handicapped children, including assessment and monitoring student performance.

3. WE RECOMMEND that preparation programs for Educational Support Team (EST) members emphasize the development of competencies to provide for service delivery in areas of consultation, prevention, intervention, assessment, program development, and evaluation.

4. WE RECOMMEND that certification for teachers of the handicapped be focused to reflect the programmatic needs of children who have similar educational handicaps.

5. WE RECOMMEND that the field or practicum component of preparation programs for teachers of the handicapped be significantly strengthened.

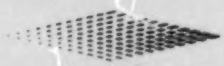
Recommendations on Development

6. WE RECOMMEND that the Department of Education strongly enforce the federally mandated requirements for a Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD) by local boards of education.

7. WE RECOMMEND that local boards of education demonstrate support for CSPD activities by adopting a program of incentives.

8. WE RECOMMEND that the Commissioner of Education direct that a prescribed portion of the P.L. 94-142 funds that flow through to local districts be set aside for inservice training.

9. WE RECOMMEND that all health specialists who consult with Educational Support Teams meet professional criteria in their own specialties.



New Jersey Special Education Study Commission Discussion of the Recommendations on Training and Development

Training

Teacher Requirements. The Commission believes there is an important difference between "approved program requirements" that demand "exposure" to broad theoretical courses or areas of study and requirements aimed at assuring specific skills in instruction and assessment. Thus, it is one thing to acquire "exposure" to developmental, cognitive, or affective disabilities; it is quite another to be skilled at using, for example, instructional strategies to assist handicapped students to become better readers, or to conduct an informal assessment of a particular child's learning problem.

Naturally, the complete education of a special education professional requires a solid grounding in theory and research in such areas as language development, developmental psychology, the psychology of exceptional children, and the like. But certification requirements that do not include the specific proficiencies that special education professionals must attain when working with children are not meaningful. Good teaching, like good law or good medicine, is practiced, not merely encountered in college courses. Certification procedures and requirements must acknowledge this fundamental point.

Competency of Certified Staff. All certified staff (i.e., those with direct student contact, those who develop curriculum, or those who supervise programs) should have a usable, working knowledge of the psychological, developmental, and educational needs of handicapped children. This fundamental connection between course work and classroom practice is supported in the literature.*

For those who have already graduated from an approved college program, required study in the education and psychology of handicapped children should be done at the inservice level. Local boards of education are encouraged to create incentives for teachers to take inservice training; incentives may take the form of tuition assistance, tuition reimbursement, or sponsorship of required courses at on-site locations (see Local Support for CSPD Activities, below).

Administrators, teachers, and other professionals who are not primarily trained to work with handicapped children nevertheless become involved with them in important ways, whether as teachers of "mainstreamed" students, as curriculum designers, or as supervisors and administrators. The services provided to handicapped children are part of a continuum of learning, not isolated and departmentalized activities. Staff knowledge should reflect this continuum.

Broadening Preparation Programs. EST professionals are charged with accurately assessing the educational needs of handicapped children. Their preparation programs should be strengthened to increase the emphasis on social, emotional, academic, and cognitive needs, as well as on assessment for instructional planning. The current reliance on traditional, standardized assessment techniques should be supplemented by a renewed focus on program planning for instruction. In short, EST members should be trained as resources for a variety of educationally related evaluations.

The disproportion of minority children in programs for the handicapped is well documented. The evidence suggests that the disproportion may result from the methods used to assess for handicapping conditions.† Training institutions should therefore sensitize their students to the racial, ethnic, and cultural differences encountered in the state's schools.

Certification. The generic "Teacher of the Handicapped" certification used in New Jersey should be focused to reflect the programmatic needs of children who have similar educational handicaps. At present, any teacher with a "Teacher of the Handicapped" certificate can teach all handicapped children, ages 5 to 20, except the deaf and the blind. Although this certification practice increases employability, it does not adequately prepare the holder of the certificate to

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* *Standards for State Approval of Teacher Education*, National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification, 1983 revised edition.

† See *The Status of Minority Group Representation in Special Education Programs in the State of New Jersey: A Summary Report*, Trenton: New Jersey Department of Education, 1980.

teach all handicapped children. Indeed, most preparation programs focus on the mildly and moderately handicapped to the exclusion of the severely and profoundly handicapped; they also compound the problem by limiting the program emphasis to the elementary level.

These maldistributions within preparation programs, while unofficial, are not arbitrary. Nor are they without consequence for the populations who are relatively neglected. The deficits thus created indicate a need for strategies that will prepare teachers to work with children who demonstrate similar educational characteristics.

The Commission recommends that the generic "Teacher of the Handicapped" certification be changed to the following certifications:

- Teacher of elementary-age children with mild to moderate educational needs, and
- Teacher of secondary-age children with mild to moderate educational needs.

To address the distinct, complex, and highly demanding educational needs of the severely and profoundly handicapped, the Commission proposes that a new certification be created: Teacher of children with severe to profound educational needs.

We support the retention of current certificates for *Teacher of the Deaf/Auditorily Impaired* and *Teacher of the Blind/Visually Impaired.* Further, the Commission views the proposed *Teacher of the Preschool Handicapped* certification as essential to delivering appropriate services to young handicapped children.

Field/Practicum Component. The field or practicum component of preparation programs should be significantly strengthened. Teacher trainees become good teachers by applying new knowledge to actual classrooms as quickly as possible. The Commission believes that prospective teachers should be exposed to a variety of educational settings and should gain experience in using a variety of teaching strategies throughout their preparation, beginning in the first semester.

The new state standards for teacher education (effective September, 1983 for incoming freshmen) recognize the importance of field experience; they add reinforcement to the Commission's recommendation. Practica should be sequenced to allow prospective teachers to adopt increasingly responsible roles: observer, assistant, and full-time teacher under supervision.

The Commission also believes that the relationships between the public schools and teacher training institutions must be strengthened. Schools and teacher training institutions should regularly exchange information about the

performance and evaluation of prospective teachers and ESP members. Prior to being assigned a trainee, classroom teacher-supervisors should be more aware of the expectations that training institutions have, both of those they supervise and of themselves as supervisors. Faculty supervision of practica should be a serious institutional commitment; thus, we believe that faculty who supervise students should be released from some of the demands of full-time teaching to supervise and guide their students.

Development

Strengthening the Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD), especially in light of the need to organize programs in accordance with BIOs, is a critical priority. Currently, local education agencies must annually plan and deliver training programs for all those involved in educating handicapped children. Federal regulations, the New Jersey Administrative Code, and the local Annual Program Plan* all require districts to develop a CSPD that meets local needs for training.

Local boards play an important role in maintaining an effective service delivery system, yet the members of these boards demonstrate varying degrees of sophistication about the education of the handicapped. The Commission encourages local boards to seek training for their members.

Since CSPDs were first required in 1978, local education agencies in New Jersey have demonstrated vast differences in their understanding of the CSPD concept and how they put it into practice. Many districts have mounted well-developed programs; others have paid only lip service to CSPD requirements. The Commission is concerned that what appears on paper in many places may not be occurring in fact.

We are convinced that the Department of Education must take steps to reiterate the CSPD mandate. Supervisors of child study at the county level should be charged with the responsibility to assure that each district's CSPD is actually being implemented. Reviews of county supervisors should include attention to this responsibility.

Local Support for CSPD Activities. Local boards of education should be directed to include the CSPD mandate in board policies. The Commission urges local boards to demonstrate their support for this inservice vehicle by providing staff with incentives to participate in training activities. These incentives may include, but need not be limited to, the following:

(1) released time from teaching,

(2) tuition assistance for enrollment in post-baccalaureate courses,

* The relevant citations are Section 121.a, pp. 380-87 of the regulations governing P.L. 94-142 and the *New Jersey Administrative Code* (6:28-1.2).

(3) tuition reimbursement for enrollment in post-baccalaureate courses,

(4) salary credit for attaining graduate degrees,

(5) expense reimbursement for attending out-of-district professional development activities, and

(6) an annual allocation of funds to support subscriptions to professional journals and periodicals.

Setting Aside Flow-Through Funds. In order to generate the most substantive motivation for instituting and maintaining the CSPD, funds should be specifically targeted to support professional development. Accordingly, the Commissioner of Education should require that a prescribed portion of P.L. 94-142 flow-through funds be set aside by local districts for inservice training. Federal regulations stipulate that a portion of Title VI-B flow-through funds may be used for inservice; chief state school officers in nine states require local education agency applicants for VI-B funds to designate a specific percentage for inservice.

Similar action by New Jersey's Department of Education and Commissioner would make funds reliably available to implement high quality CSPD activities. Together with sound needs assessment, planning, and well-designed evaluation procedures, these flow-through funds can significantly improve the quality of inservice at the local level.

Professional Criteria for Health Specialists. Various health specialists play an important part in identifying, assessing, and developing educational programs for handicapped children. Yet, these specialists often do not have the specific knowledge necessary to make informed evaluations about such children.

The Commission strongly believes that all health specialists who provide consulting services to ESTs should meet professional criteria in their specialties. The following criteria for physicians are provided as an illustration of the kinds of criteria we have in mind:

All physicians providing medical consulting services to ESTs should meet the following professional standards. Only on demonstration of having met the criteria would the physician be consulted.

A. **To give physical examinations**

1. Licensed physician

B. **To give neurological and developmental examinations**

1. Board certification in at least one of the following specialties:
   a. pediatrics
   b. neurology
   c. child neurology
2. Competency in child neurology and developmental and learning disabilities, as evidenced by experience and interest

C. **To give psychiatric evaluations**

1. Board certification in at least one of the following specialties:
   a. psychiatry
   b. child psychiatry
2. Competency in emotional and psychiatric disorders of children, as demonstrated by experience and interest

New Jersey Special Education Study Commission Recommendations on Funding

During the past two years, the Commission has examined many issues facing state policy makers who must provide the funds needed to pay for educating children with special needs. We have tried to meet the difficult challenge of formulating new policies to support the cost of these services in an equitable and reasonable way. The following twelve recommendations on funding are the result of the Commission's study.

1. WE RECOMMEND that the state aid system for special education be based on the approved excess cost of programs and services, rather than on the current system of pupil classification.

2. WE RECOMMEND that all components of the service delivery system for special education be comprehensively defined and described, including a range of minimum, optimum, and maximum class sizes.

3. WE RECOMMEND that the Department of Education determine costs on a program basis so that guidelines for reasonable and adequate cost outlays for delivering special education services can be established.

4. WE RECOMMEND that the cost of EST services be included in determining the total cost of delivering special education services.

5. WE RECOMMEND that the funding mechanism include a range of approved excess costs that will accommodate the regional cost differences for resources statewide

6. WE RECOMMEND that the state place a major emphasis on early prevention of handicapping conditions by funding programs designed to meet the developmental needs of children in grades K-3.

7. WE RECOMMEND that a funding model be used that requires educational agencies to submit their annual program applications for review and approval by the Department of Education.

8. WE RECOMMEND that state aid for special education be provided during the same year as services are delivered. Payment should be monthly (September-June), and expenditures should be subject to auditing to ensure that the funds are spent on approved programs and services.

9. WE RECOMMEND that any adjustments to state aid and carryover monies be determined by audit, based on actual program expenditure for the year. The Department of Education would decide the effect of carryover monies on the following year's entitlement.

10. WE RECOMMEND that the Department of Education establish "program-driven pilots." These should be implemented beginning in September, 1985, to demonstrate the proposed funding system, so that necessary adjustments can be made prior to its implementation statewide.

11. WE RECOMMEND that the residential costs for handicapped students placed in private facilities be shared substantially by the state.

12. WE RECOMMEND that the state fund a research and development program in special education.

New Jersey Special Education Study Commission Discussion of the Recommendations on Funding

Critique of the Present Funding System

"Bounty System." The chief criticism of the present special education funding system is that it creates a need for districts to classify students by handicapping category in order to receive state aid. Many believe this encourages districts to overclassify students, creating what has been called a "bounty system," with students as the basis for the bounties. Further, the weighting factors of the system create a financial incentive to classify and place students in categories with higher reimbursement multipliers. For example, the multiplier for perceptually impaired students is .28; for educable mentally retarded stu-

dents it is .41. But the multiplier for a resource room is .60. An increase in the number of resource rooms is not wrong per se, but the system, in effect, rewards their creation irrespective of actual learning needs; this is not good educational practice.

Statewide Averages. Another significant criticism of the funding system is that it is based on "statewide" averages, which in turn are based on prior year costs and enrollment data. Such an approach does not provide for variations in the cost of instruction from district to district. Nor does it allow for the considerable differences in districts' ability to support the costs of special education from local resources.

Major problems associated with statewide averages include the following:

(1) In general, cost averaging ignores inter-district differences of size, cost-of-living, class size, and other factors often beyond the control of local districts.

(2) Using average costs discourages expanding, upgrading, or creating new programs and services.

(3) Cost averaging encourages incremental planning and budgeting rather than long-range planning based on current needs.

(4) Cost averaging encourages programming based on the past rather than on the needs of the present or projected needs.

Cost Variation and Cost Effectiveness. Without question there are significant variations in the cost of the same type of program in New Jersey. In 1981-82, for example, the per pupil expenditure (PPE) for programs for the emotionally disturbed ranged from a low of $2,052 to a high of $16,325. Yet, under the current system, districts receive the same state aid per pupil regardless of the actual expenditure. Thus, the current funding system benefits low-spending districts and penalizes those that spend more on their students. Even more important, however, is the fact that the current system does nothing to encourage cost-effectiveness in special education programming. Nor does the system of funding work to achieve the best possible educational outcomes; it does nothing to foster programming designed to meet individual student need.

Other Criticisms. Other major criticisms of New Jersey's special education financing mechanism follow.

(1) Related services such as physical therapy, occupational therapy, and counseling, which are quite costly and which vary from pupil to pupil, are reimbursed at a rate which fails to cover the true cost of the services

(2) Reimbursement based on each year's September 30 count penalizes districts for students who receive initial services after that date. This creates a special hardship on districts with high turnover, low income, or both.

(3) Costs for child study teams (or the recommended ESTs) are not reimbursable.

(4) No mechanism exists for funding support services for handicapped students participating in regular education and the regular class teachers receiving these students.

(5) Under the current system, there is no way to ensure that funds allocated for special education are actually spent on special education. Some state aid represents reimbursement for past expenditures and is commingled with the total state aid received by the district.

Program-Based Funding

A Different Focus. The Commission is convinced that the system for funding special education in New Jersey must have a different focus. It should be based on the program and the related services provided the child, not on the handicapping condition. Programs are, after all, the combination of methods and resources used to educate a handicapped child; the program is special education for that child. In economic terms, the program is the visible commodity being purchased with state funds.

Both the handicapping condition and the educational needs of the child are considered in the assessment process and when the IEP is drawn up. Linking the child's characteristics as a learner with a system of program and services to meet the child's needs is appropriate at this point in the delivery system. It is logical, therefore, to link state aid with the cost of providing these programs and services. State aid ought to be based on a range of adequate and reasonable costs which have been determined and approved by the Department of Education.

Consumer Benefit. Under the present funding system, it is difficult — if not impossible — to know whether categorical funding buys benefits for students; a direct correlation cannot be established between the dollar spent and the benefit purchased. A funding mechanism driven by program and services, however, would provide a benefit to consumers as well because it would make cost-benefit analysis easier. The program and its cost would be delineated and aid would be based on that information; thus, funds could be tracked more easily.

Three Necessary Elements. Three elements are essential for implementing a program-based funding system. First, the elements of the instructional setting must be clearly identified. Second, the intensity of instruction and the related services required must be delineated, based on the IEP. Third, costs must be accurately estimated.

Program Accountability

One of the first requirements of any responsible funding system is that monies are spent for the purposes intended. The Commission is extremely concerned that no mechanism exists within the present system to ensure that categorical aid for special education is actually spent on special education. We believe that the correlation between funding accountability and program quality is fundamentally important. Therefore, the Commission is recommending a funding model that requires local education agencies to submit their applications and proposals for review and approval by the Department of Education.

The proposals should be required to provide the kind of information needed to conduct responsible program evaluations and budget audits. Integral to this approach, however, is the need to inform local districts early enough in the previous year of what their next year's entitlements will be. Such an approach would allow for current-year funding and would strengthen program accountability. Proposals could also be linked to local district Special Education Plans mandated by code.

Current Year Funding

Inequity and "Playing Catch-Up." The current system of reimbursing for last year's costs instead of funding for the current year's expenses is a major problem. It inhibits program expansion, particularly in poorer districts, and predisposes a district to plan with an eye toward the funding past when it ought to be concerned primarily with the programmatic future.

A recent Rutgers University study on the state's school financing system concluded that the reimbursement system is a major source of inequity in terms of overall expenditure levels among districts. Poorer districts do not have the resources locally to fund program improvements. Because they must wait a year to receive aid for new or improved programs, their program efforts are always in the position of "playing catch-up" with student needs.

The Commission believes that the problems of the current reimbursement approach can be met by switching to an approach based on current year funding that relies on program applications. State aid for education should be provided during the year when the monies are to be spent. Funding adjustments should

be made on the basis of audits of program expenditures; however, last-minute expenditures must be guarded against.

Because of the great difference between current procedures and our recommendation, the Commission recognizes that its views on current year funding will require a phasing-in period.

Determining Costs and the Funding Mechanism

Because costs of programs and services cannot be projected now, the Commission is not recommending a specific funding mechanism. We believe a computer simulation assessing the impact of the new system on each district should be done before a new funding system is presented to the legislature. Nevertheless, the Commission is prepared to offer several interim recommendations on gathering the data necessary to evaluate an alternative to the present system.

First, the Department of Education should delineate programs and services comprehensively and estimate their costs. The funding should be based on a determination of costs, not on pupil count, as is now the case. Second, the Department can then establish guidelines or standards for reasonable and adequate costs for delivering special education services. Third, costs can be investigated by convening a broad based task force from the field. This approach has recently been used in Illinois to determine the costs for all of its school funding. Once the programs and services to be delivered have been decided (along the lines recommended in the "Program Options" section of the report), reasonable costs can be determined.

Cost determination should not be confused with "expenditures," which represents a district's actual outlay. Expenditures encompass both the concept of cost determination (a reasonable and adequate cost as determined by the state) and choice (monies a district may want to spend beyond the cost determination).

The Commission also recommends that the program and service descriptions indicate a minimum, optimum, and maximum in class size, rather than just a maximum. The minimum can be used to limit expenditures within reasonable bounds.

Variations in the cost of delivery should be accommodated in the new system. Therefore both a cost determination and a range of excess costs should be included to take into account the fact that certain expenses, e.g., local variations in salary ranges and costs of materials and services, lie beyond the control of the local education agency.

Residential Costs. The Commission believes strongly that the state should share substantially in the residential costs (room and board) of placing children in the residential facilities for educational purposes. Although local districts now pay the educational costs (tuition) for such children, with some state reimbursement, it is inappropriate for local districts to pay room and board. These costs are often staggeringly high, averaging as much as $30,000 per student per year; in some cases they are as high as $50,000. These costs fall unevenly on districts, without regard for the ability to pay. Inasmuch as these costs are necessary to provide a proper placement, the state should share them.

Services, Not Pupil Count. The Commission firmly believes that services, not label or pupil count should be the determining factor in funding. Counts may be appropriate for such things as out-of-district placements, but the funding system must not be driven by such considerations. Funding should be based on the types and intensity of the educational services required to provide the appropriate program for the child. The funding system must not encourage loading up of classes, placing children in more restrictive educational environments, or grouping children inappropriately.

Piloting the Funding System

It is imperative that we assess the consequences of the changes in the funding system. Examining their impact on each district would be too cumbersome, however. But the new system could be computer-simulated, as recommended above. Another way to assess what the new system will do is to pilot the recommended alternative in representative districts. The Commission recommends just such a piloting process, to be carried out in September, 1985, to evaluate whether the system we are recommending is feasible.

Without such intensive planning and piloting, it will not be possible to determine costs accurately; nor will it be possible to determine the levels of state aid required, nor a specific funding mechanism. Service, program, and funding information is critical to assessing the impact on individual districts. Accurate piloting will require that the districts participating in the pilot move to a program-based mode for delivering special education services. They must propose budgets within the recommended funding system, and they must be allowed to proceed under a "save harmless" clause that assures their state funds will not decrease as a result of their participation.

Research and Development

The Commission believes that research at the local district level to develop more cost-effective and educationally successful programs for handicapped children is essential. Therefore, the state should appropriate annually a sum of money to support locally developed and implemented research in special education.

Members of the Special Education Study Commission

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*These members were not able to participate in the consideration of the final recommendations.